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Bangalore Mirror ON SUNDAY

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Just 21.21% of Karnataka is under forest cover, though National Forest Policy recommends states must have 33% forested land in their geographical area to maintain ecological stability

GREEN COVER BLOWN

Forest land diversion for development projects major reason for loss

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The principal bench of National Green Tribunal (NGT) has asked the Karnataka Forests and Ecology Department, apart from all other states and union territories of India, to submit a report on the loss of trees or green cover. Notably, the current forest area in Karnataka is 21.21% of its total geographical area. While the state's total area is 1,91,791 square kilometre, only 40,678.23 square kilometre are under forest cover.

A district-wise analysis of forest cover shows that Vijayapura has the lowest area under forest cover (0.77%), followed by Kalaburagi (3.10%) and Mysuru (7.01%).

Districts with high forest cover include Uttara Kannada (80.80%), Shivamogga (67.11%), and Chamrajanagar (65.04%).

The National Forest Policy of India recommends that at least 33% of the total geographical area should be under forests to maintain ecological stability.

Conservationists say low forest

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 »

Hundreds of acres of forest in Bandipur Tiger Reserve gutted in a fire in 2019

> "A large amount of forest area in the state is diverted for various development projects, including linear projects and mining. Such a high rate of forest clearance contradicts the objectives of the Wildlife and Forest Protection Acts — Activist

OMINOUS SCIENCE

Recent data reveals SSLC students find Science to be most challenging subject dethroning erstwhile tough nut to crack, Maths

PAGE 2

IN A BLAZE DAZE

Online petitions, complaints to BBMP and all other pleas fail as Mittaganahalli dump yard continues to raise burning hell

PAGE 4

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2 THINGS TO DO

01 Equestrian tournament

Witness the grand finale of the 14th edition of the Equestrian Premier League (EPL) 2024, bringing together 20 equestrian clubs from across India and showcasing the nation's top talent in competitive riding. Participants will compete in three exciting categories, tailored for different skill levels. The event promises an unforgettable experience for participants and spectators alike. Whether you're an equestrian enthusiast or a newcomer to the sport, this finale is set to deliver a thrilling day of competition and camaraderie. **Where: Embassy International Riding School; When: November 24, 5 pm onwards**

02 Tagore's tales for kids

Rediscover Rabindranath Tagore's stories for children with "Salaam robi" presented by National Gallery of Modern Art Bengaluru (Ministry of Culture, Government of India) in collaboration with Bangalore Little Theatre. Tagore wrote many stories for children, including realistic tales that provide insight into everyday life and fables that point out life's paradoxes. Admission is free on a first-come basis.
Where: National Gallery of Modern Art, Palace Road; When: November 24, 4:30 pm

Cultural & literary extravaganza

St Joseph's Pre-University College hosted their annual inter-collegiate festival 'Equinox 2024' on Saturday. The students from PU colleges across Bengaluru participated in the event, showcasing their talents in healthy competition through 37 cultural and literary events, including a personality contest, clash of council, Indian and western dancing, singing, fashion show, etc. The event was inaugurated by a former student and renowned Bharatanatyam dancer, Charles Ma. He motivated the students to follow their dreams. SJPUC Director Rev Fr Joy Rodrigues SJ, Principal CR Rajendra, Campus Animator Rev Fr Ashwin Cordeiro, Vice Principal Nirmala Raghunandan, along with the Student Council Governor Soumya S and Cultural Coordinator Vivian Jennifer, presided over the event. — BMB

SSLC exams: Science snags 'toughest subject' crown

Teachers' forum urge board to revert to earlier design, structure; KSEAB defends move, says changes aim to instill scientific temperament, critical thinking among children

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What's the toughest subject for SSLC students? Most would instinctively point to Mathematics, a subject notorious for its traditionally low scores. However, recent data tells a different story—Science has now taken the lead as the most challenging subject for SSLC students, outpacing Mathematics in difficulty and performance struggles.

Sources said that changes in the design and structure of science question papers by the Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB) have drastically reduced the number of students scoring a perfect 100. While teachers are wrestling with strategies to teach science effectively, students are struggling to crack the code for preparation.

Prior to 2021, out of seven to eight lakh students appearing for the SSLC exams, an impressive 6,000–8,000 would achieve full marks in the science subject. However, the trend has shifted dramatically. Despite over eight lakh students taking the exam in subsequent years, the count of perfect scores has plummeted. In 2024, out of 8.60 lakh students, only 277 managed a perfect 100, a sharp decline from the 983 students who achieved the same feat in 2023.

Rise in students failing in Science

On the other hand, the number of students failing the science exam has also seen a significant increase, impacting their academic progression. Noting this, the Karnataka Science Teachers' Forum urged the board to revert to the earlier design and structure of science question papers.

However, defending the changes, KSEAB Director NH Gopalakrishna explained, "The question paper format was altered to encourage logical thinking, analytical skills, and decision-making abilities among students, rather than rote memorisation. These changes aim to instill scientific temperament and critical thinking. The new format will remain unchanged for the upcoming academic year, as communicated to the Karnataka Science Teachers' Forum."

'In 2024, out of 8.60 lakh students, only 277 managed a perfect 100 in Science exam, a sharp decline from the 983 students who achieved the same feat in 2023'

> **"Question paper format was altered to encourage logical thinking, analytical skills, & decision-making abilities among students, rather than rote memorisation**
> – NH Gopalakrishna, KSEAB Director

Science teachers' viewpoint

Science teachers believe that reducing one-mark questions while increasing higher-mark questions has made the subject more demanding for students. Sridhar Patil Kulkarni, President of the Karnataka Science Teachers' Forum, noted that although the tougher question papers may enhance students' critical thinking, writing, and expression skills, they should be designed with consideration for students' mental state and learning capabilities.

He further said that the changes in the science question paper include a significant reduction in one and two-mark questions, replaced by a higher number of three and four-mark questions, alongside the introduction of new five-mark questions. The board has allocated 30 per cent of marks for easy and very easy questions, 50 per cent for moderate ones, and 20 per cent for difficult ones. Additionally, the question paper format has been modelled to align with the standards of the CBSE and ICSE syllabuses. While the revised structure aims to promote modern educational practices, teachers emphasise the importance of maintaining a balance between academic rigour and accessibility to prevent overwhelming students.

Best policy is what actually works: says top official

State Development Commissioner Uma Mahadevan also stresses on importance of informed citizenry in creation of better policy during 2-day policy festival

The best policy is what actually works, said Uma Mahadevan, Development Commissioner of Karnataka, at the inaugural event of the two-day policy festival, which concludes in Bengaluru on Saturday.

Neeti Habba is organised by the Centre for Budget and Policy Studies (CBPS), an interdisciplinary research institution established in Bengaluru in 1998, at the Infosys Science Foundation.

"Sometimes policy goals are very large and grandiose, but sometimes when they manifest on the ground, they can be simple and delicate," added Mahadevan, addressing an audience of students, civil society members, and government officials, which included former Member of Parliament Rajeev Gowda.

Uma Mahadevan, an Additional Chief Secretary level officer, also stressed on the importance of informed citizenry in the creation of better policy. Niveditha Menon, Director of CBPS said, as a public policy institution, they take this responsibility of informing citizens seriously, and it is their duty to ensure that the tools and frameworks they use are genuinely helpful to everyone. "Our goal is to create open, diverse and accessible knowledge systems and to figure out what we collectively mean by inclusivity, diversity and equality, and putting them into action," added Menon.

The festival also features game-based workshops like 'Come, let us build an Anganwadi', hands-on activities, audio-visual experiences, and interactive displays designed to engage a range of stakeholders. – PTI

Cops to secure seized items with digital technology

Digital tracking aims to enhance safety, prevent discrepancies in inventory handling

Seized jewellery displayed at a police station in the city

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To enhance the safety and accountability of seized items, including jewellery, cash, and other valuables, the Bengaluru City Police is adopting digital technology. This initiative aims to eliminate discrepancies in inventory management and ensure transparency in police operations. City Police Commissioner B Dayananda stressed digitising police station operations after observing irregularities in the handling of seized items. The move comes in response to instances where officers, after being transferred, left without accounting for items under their custody.

Comprehensive digitisation underway

Police personnel are undergoing training to adapt to this new system, sources revealed. A police official said, "As part of this initiative, complete digital records of seized items, including information on criminals, weapons, and other case-related materials, are being created. A special software is being used to document details of habitual offenders, including their addresses, pending cases, and current activities. This will enable officers to closely monitor their movements. Additionally, licensed firearms within each jurisdiction are being digitised to track usage and prevent misuse."

Addressing past irregularities

Recent investigations uncovered discrepancies in station records. For instance, a FIR was filed on a former inspector from JP Nagar for failing to return items seized in 24 cases. Similarly, a former inspector from Byatarayanapura was found to have not returned Rs 72 lakh seized in a case after his transfer.

> **"Each seized item will be tagged with unique QR code containing details of investigating officer, seizure date, & case info**
>
> –Police official

How the system works

A police official explained, "Each seized item will be tagged with a unique QR code containing details of the investigating officer, seizure date, and case information. This system allows senior officers to periodically audit the status of these items. Even if an investigating officer is transferred, the record will track the responsible officer, ensuring continuity and accountability. The new system also aids in tracking case progress in court and ensures seized items are protected until cases reach their logical conclusion. According to senior officials, this will significantly improve the management of seized materials and reduce irregularities."

Sources said that the Commissioner has mandated body-worn cameras for officers on public duty and biometric devices for fingerprint collection during investigations. Additionally, under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Act, digital evidence collection is being enforced to bolster case integrity. "These technological upgrades reflect the city police's commitment to transparency and efficiency in handling materials, ensuring justice is served without compromise," added an official.

Police seek help to identify deceased

An unidentified man was found dead on Saturday morning near a CNG gas station on KH Road. Alerted by concerned passersby, Hoysala personnel responded and confirmed the death with assistance from the police helpline.

The deceased, estimated to be between 55 and 60 years old, had no identification documents, mobile phone, or personal vouchers. He was medium-built, approximately 5 feet 2 inches in height, with a wheat complexion, a thin face, and white-mixed hair. Notably, he had distinctive tattoos: one of children on his right chest, "KESH AM" inscribed on his right arm, and a horse tattoo elsewhere.

Man, aged around 55-60 years, found dead on KH Road footpath with no ID on him. Anyone with info can reach out at 112 or at 9663071321 or 080-22942582

At the time of discovery, he was wearing a light blue full-sleeve shirt and black night pants. Police officers are now seeking the heirs or any acquaintances of the deceased to come forward. Anyone who recognises these details or has information about his identity is urged to contact the nearest Police Control Room at 112 or reach out directly to SR Nagar Police Station at 9663071321 or 080-22942582. –BMB

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Trashy smoke causing critical health issues in Mittaganahalli

Complaints, online petitions, pleas fail as residents of areas around dump yard continued to reel under toxic effects of unauthorised garbage burning

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Smoke rose on Thursday evening at Mittaganahalli

Over the past few weeks, more than a thousand residents, living around Mittaganahalli dump yard, have raised concerns regarding smoke emanating from illegal garbage burning near the dump yard. Residents have signed an online petition, approached Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) and raised complaints at their jurisdictional police station.

However, there has been no respite from the unbearable foul smell and smoke from the burning. "Garbage and harmful materials have been burning for weeks. While BBMP marshals and police respond to our complaints late at night and extinguish the fire, it resumes once they leave, " said a resident.

"On Wednesday, around midnight, illegal burning of toxic material such as wire and plastic restarted. While BBMP marshals and police were proactive and came to the spot in no time, the fire was already doused by then. Police were unable to locate the burning location and warned private processing unit owners not to repeat it. However, it goes on," said an agitated resident from the area. Locals are alleging aggravated health impacts of the toxic smoke.

"Toxic items are being burnt every day, mostly at night. It leaves a horrible stench that irritates the nose and leaves a burning feeling every time you step out. One can't stand on their balcony now," lamented another local. A resident has reported that her nose started bleeding a couple of days ago.

> **"Toxic items are being burnt night. It leaves horrible stench that irritates nose and leaves a burning feeling every time you go out** – Resident

"I started coughing, and my nose started to bleed. I can think of only one reason leading to this," rued the resident. "People burning the garbage also include the immigrant population from the economically weaker sections. They told the marshals that they were burning wires to extract copper and make a living. They are burning wires, releasing toxic smoke and a strong stench," another resident told BM.

Concerns about groundwater contamination

Locals say they are concerned about ash and leachate from open burning contaminating the soil and entering groundwater.

"One of the illegal burning sites is right next to that lake in the area. Looking at the state of affairs, we are certain the groundwater is already impacted. Most apartments in the area are getting tanker water from further away, oblivious that one cannot escape groundwater contamination," said one of the residents.

BM had earlier reported that many in the area are contemplating or have already decided to relocate owing to deteriorating air quality and foul smells that linger around the clock. "I'm planning to move from this area but unsure where to start. However, the declining health of my family is hard to ignore," said another resident.

Vijayapura has lowest forest cover

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

cover in the state is mainly due to forest land diversion for various development projects.

"A large amount of forest area in the state is diverted for various development projects, including linear projects and mining. Such a high rate of forest clearance contradicts the objectives of the Wildlife and Forest Protection Acts. While development projects are also necessary, the government must consider an assessment of the carrying capacity of the forest areas of the state for sustainable development," said a city-based activist.

Forests taken

According to data from the Karnataka Forest Department (KFD), the state so far has diverted 32,076.25 hectares of forest land for nearly 800 non-forestry projects under the Forest Conservation Act, of 1980.

MoEF&CC data for the past two years (June 2022 to August 2024) shows that Karnataka has approved over a hundred projects requesting land diversion from forests, wildlife reserves, and other eco-sensitive areas. As per the data on the Parivesh portal, the state approved 107 forest clearance projects, the highest among southern states. Kerala is second, with 89 projects approved during the same period.

What NGT order demands

In the National Green Tribunal's order, states have been instructed to also include in the report other information such as the status of the forest as of date, factors responsible for loss, and action taken report for the conservation and management of the forest. The report has to be submitted by all states by December 18, 2024.

NGT passed the order after taking suo motu cognizance of a news article on a report by Global Forest Watch, highlighting the loss of 2.33 million hectares of tree cover since 2000 in India.

"The matter relates to the loss of 2.33 million hectares of tree cover since 2000 in India, equivalent to a six percent decrease in tree cover during this period. The article cites the Global Forest Watch, which tracks forest changes in near real-time using satellite data and other sources. According to its data, the country

lost 4,14,000 hectares of humid primary forest (4.1%) from 2002 to 2023, making up 18% of its total tree cover loss in the same period," noted the green court in its order copy.

NGT also noted that the matter indicates violation of the provisions of the Forest Conservation Act, 1980, Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, and the Environment Protection Act, 1986, and raises substantial issues relating to compliance with the environmental norms and implementation of the rules.

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Garbage piles

KG Halli

In KG Halli's Kushal Nagar near Hanifiya Masjid Road, no garbage trucks have come for four days, forcing residents to dump waste near the KG Halli Metro station site.

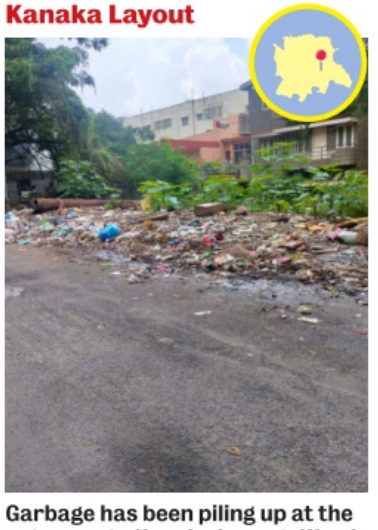
Footpath encroachment

BTM Layout

A fence structure encroaches on the footpath opposite Kuvempu Park on 5th Cross Road, Stage 2, BTM Layout.

Trash trouble

Kanaka Layout


Garbage has been piling up at the entrance to Kanaka Layout, Ward No 181, for the past one week. It is causing inconvenince and foul smell.

20 injured in highway collisions

IN BRIEF

Over 20 people were injured in multiple-vehicle collisions involving a private bus, a KSRTC bus, and a car near Addahole on the Mangaluru-Bengaluru National Highway, police said on Saturday. Most of the injured were in the private bus that overturned after losing control and collided with the KSRTC bus. The private bus was carrying a group of college students from Bengaluru. They were returning from a trip to Kundapur. A car trailing behind also crashed into the KSRTC bus, resulting in a chain collision.

The injured were rushed to private hospitals in Nelyadi and Kadaba for first aid, while several were referred to Puttur for advanced treatment. The Uppinangady police have registered a case and further investigation is underway. -BMB

Hairdryer blasts in failed murder plot

The investigation into the hairdryer blast case in Ilkal town in Bagalkot district revealed that it was a murder plot by a quarry worker.

Siddappa Sheelavant (35), a quarry worker, had plotted to eliminate Shasikala on November 15, but it left his partner Basava Rajeshwari wounded, police said.

He has been arrested and has confessed to his crime, they said.

Sheelavant, a resident of Kushtagi Taluk of Koppal district, worked in a granite company. He suspected Shasikala was causing a rift between him and Rajeshwari, who had recently become friends with Shasikala and started drifting away from him.

Angered over it, Sheelavant planted a detonator in a hairdryer and sent it via courier to the address of Shasikala on November 15. Upon receiving the package, Shasikala, preoccupied with work, handed it to her neighbour Rajeshwari to inspect. When Rajeshwari opened and switched on the hair dryer, it exploded, injuring her hand, police reported. -BMB

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₹25.97 lakh loss due to GST lapses at truck terminal

CID's probe into ₹47.10-crore scam reveals significant financial loss due to administrative lapses, with former managing directors under scrutiny

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(File photo) Auditor's report confirmed losses & called for accountability

The D Devaraj Arasu Truck Terminal Limited (DDUTTL) is embroiled in financial turmoil as the CID's (Crime Investigation Department) investigation into a ₹47.10 crore scam reaches its final stage. The terminal faces a ₹25.97 lakh loss due to the cancellation of its GST registration.

Between 2017 and 2021, DDUTTL operated without an active GST number for nearly four years. The registration was initially revoked in 2020 due to non-renewal, yet transactions worth crores continued, bypassing crucial tax regulations. As per an auditor's report, the terminal missed out on GST input claims totalling ₹25.97 lakh during this period, exacerbating its financial losses. The report confirmed the monetary damage, recommended identifying those responsible and taking stringent action.

The Terminal Management Board, acting on a report from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), has resolved to deposit the lost ₹25.97 lakh into the terminal treasury. However, the board is not stopping there. In a bid to uncover the underlying causes, they plan to file a formal complaint with the Lokayukta. This step aims to trace accountability and impose corrective measures on those implicated.

The CID has issued an appeal letter, urging cooperation from all stakeholders. Despite numerous challenges and delays, officials remain committed to concluding the probe efficiently.

Transport Department officials who served as terminal Managing Directors during the contentious 2017-2021 period are under scrutiny.

The accountability debate

The timeline under scrutiny spans multiple managing directors, including KT Halaswamy, J Purushottam, and Siddappa H, who held office between 2017 and 2021. Notices have been served to these officials, including IAS officer Shikha, for their alleged roles in the oversight. While Shikha's tenure (March 2020 to November 2020) was short, the CAG report asserts that all successive MDs bear responsibility for the lapse.

However, the CAG maintains its stance, pointing out that the consequences of running DDUTTL without GST registration fall squarely on the shoulders of those at the helm during the period. The report stated the management for dereliction of duty, likening the scenario to a truck operating without a permit a clear regulatory breach.

Shiva Prakash, Managing Director of DDUTTL, declined to comment further, only stating that after the suo motu cancellation of GST registration due to non-filing of returns, an appeal should have been filed on time. Successive MDs ran the company for 3 years, 9 months, and 23 days without filing the appeal or obtaining a fresh GST registration. The CAG's auditors identified the negligence, quantified the loss, and recommended holding the responsible officers accountable.

King Cobra has a scientific name

Minister for Forest, Biology, and Environment, Eshwar B Khandre, officially announced the scientific name for the King Cobra found in the Western Ghats and Malnad regions of Karnataka as Ophiophagus Kaalinga. Praising the efforts of researchers who study and work towards the conservation of these feared creatures, Khandre congratulated herpetologist Dr Gowrishankar and his team for their groundbreaking research on the rare Ophiophagus Kaalinga species in the Western Ghats and Malnad. He lauded their initiative to give the snake a Kannada-inspired scientific name and organise an event to mark the occasion.

Drawing a connection to mythology, the minister said "The story of Lord Krishna dancing on the head of the serpent Kalinga, famously known as Kaalinga Mardhana, is well-known to all Kannadigas. Kaalinga symbolises a black cobra, or king snake, which is why giving it this name is a matter of pride for the state."

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Gloom elsewhere, but in K'taka, triple joy for Cong

Party's clean sweep in 3 constituencies' bypolls underscores its strength in state

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The political dynamics following the recent by-elections reflect a tale of three states: while Maharashtra's resounding win bolstered the BJP-led NDA, and Jharkhand's verdict served as a consolidation point for the INDIA alliance; Karnataka emerged as a significant morale booster for the ruling Congress. The party's clean sweep in the three constituencies of Channapatna, Shiggaon, and Sandur underscored its growing strength in the state as it defeated both the combined strength of BJP and JDS, with its tally now rising to 138 seats in the assembly.

In Karnataka, Congress not only retained Sandur—vacated by E Tukaram after his Lok Sabha victory in Ballari—but also wrested Channapatna and Shiggaon, traditionally NDA strongholds, adding two crucial seats to its count. This reversal comes with its own ironies. In Maharashtra, the BJP and its allies struggled in the Lok Sabha polls but made gains in assembly elections. Karnataka (except in Sandur), in contrast, saw the Congress falter in the Lok Sabha elections in Channapatna (part of Bengaluru Rural) and Shiggaon (part of Haveri parliamentary constituency) but managed a strong comeback in the assembly bypolls.

Congress credits leadership

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar quickly credited the bypoll victory to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's leadership and the government's flagship "five guarantees," which have struck a chord with the electorate. Speaking on Saturday, Shivakumar described the results as a "prelude to the 2028 assembly elections," expressing confidence in the party's ability to secure another term in the state. "The by-elections, held on November 13 with results announced today, reflect a deepening of Congress's hold in Karnataka amid shifting electoral patterns. The party's success could serve as a significant counter-narrative to the BJP's dominance at the national level and boost its confidence as it positions itself within the broader INDIA alliance post 2024 general elections," he said.

Congress workers celebrate after the party's win, in Bengaluru on Saturday

National perspective

A political pundit said, "The contrasting outcomes in Maharashtra and Karnataka highlight the nuanced electoral strategies at play. Maharashtra's BJP and allies turned their assembly poll performance into a rebound after Lok Sabha setbacks. However, Congress's Karnataka strategy—a blend of strong grassroots leadership and welfare-driven promises—allowed it to defy its earlier Lok Sabha underperformance and consolidate power at the state level. As Congress celebrates this victory, it will likely analyse the Karnataka model to replicate its success in other states while addressing weaknesses exposed in the Lok Sabha polls."

JMM supporters celebrate the party's victory in Jharkhand Assembly elections; Right: Maharashtra Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis with party leader Chandrashekhar Bawankule celebrate Mahayuti alliance's victory in the Maharashtra elections

Bommai family's stronghold falls in Shiggaon

In a major upset, Congress' Yasir Ahmed Khan Pathan clinched the Shiggaon Assembly seat, defeating Bharath Bommai, son of former Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, by 13,448 votes. Pathan, who had lost to Basavaraj Bommai in the 2023, secured 1,00,756 votes, while Bharath managed 87,308. This bypoll marked Bharath's unsuccessful debut in electoral politics. The Shiggaon seat, a BJP bastion, was vacated after Basavaraj Bommai's election to the Lok Sabha. This defeat ended a long-standing hold, as Basavaraj had represented the constituency four times.

CP Yogeeshwara triumphs

The high-profile Channapatna bypoll saw

Congress candidate CP Yogeeshwara

secure a landslide victory over JD(S) candidate Nikhil Kumaraswamy, son of Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy, by a margin of 25,413 votes. Yogeeshwara, a seasoned politician and actor-turned-leader, garnered 1,12,642 votes against Nikhil's 87,229. Yogeeshwara's political journey took a dramatic turn earlier this year when he left the BJP and joined Congress, citing dissatisfaction with ticket allocation in the BJP-JD(S) alliance. Nikhil, the grandson of former PM HD Deve Gowda, was fielded by JD(S) from the seat vacated by his father. Despite heavy campaigning by BJP and JD(S) stalwarts Nikhil could not avert loss.

Annapoorna retains Sandur

Annapoorna, the wife of Ballari MP E Tukaram, retained the Sandur seat for Congress, defeating the BJP's Bangaru Hanumanthu by 9,649 votes. Annapoorna received 93,616 votes, while Hanumanthu secured 83,967. This bypoll was necessitated after her husband vacated the seat following his election to the Lok Sabha.

3 BIG WINNERS

1 Siddaramaiah

This by-election victory marks a personal win for Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who has been under scrutiny due to probes into the MUDA, Waqf, and ST Development Corporation cases. After Congress' defeat in the Lok Sabha elections, ministers had called for a reassessment of the Guarantee schemes. However, this victory reinforces the legitimacy of the party's guarantee schemes and strengthens Siddaramaiah's leadership, positioning him better for the upcoming Zilla Panchayat, Taluk Panchayat, and BBMP elections.

2 DK Shivakumar

The Deputy Chief Minister has scored a significant personal win with this victory. He faced a setback when his younger brother, DK Suresh, lost the Bengaluru Rural parliamentary constituency. Ironically, CP Yogeeshwara, who had campaigned for the BJP and played a key role in the defeat of Suresh, became a valuable asset for DK Shivakumar. Demonstrating political savvy, DKS brought the disgruntled CPY into the Congress fold and awarded him a party ticket, following the principle of "my enemy's enemy is my friend." This helped secure a Congress victory in the Vokkaliga heartland.

3 CP Yogeeshwara

Following his victory, the seasoned turncoat politician likened himself to an IPL player, stating that he can belong to any party but will always ensure his team clinches the win. Notably, Yogeeshwara, who had never secured over 1 lakh votes since his first contest in 1999, reached this milestone for the first time.

3 BIG LOSERS

1 HD Kumaraswamy

Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy regards Ramanagar district as the place that gave him political rebirth. Although he hails from Hassan district, it was in Ramanagar where he re-established his leadership, winning from the constituency during his two terms as Chief Minister. He secured victories in 2004, 2008, and 2013. In 2018, he contested both the Ramanagar and Channapatna constituencies, winning both, but later vacated Ramanagar to ensure his wife, Anitha Kumaraswamy, retained the seat. He won Channapatna in both 2018 and 2023. After securing a win in Mandya Lok Sabha polls, Kumaraswamy relinquished Channapatna to make way for his son Nikhil. However, in this personal battle against the DKS family, he lost.

2 Nikhil Kumaraswamy

Nikhil Kumaraswamy faced a disastrous defeat in the Channapatna by-election, marking a hat-trick of losses. He had previously lost the Mandya parliamentary constituency in 2019 and Ramanagar in 2023, and now Channapatna in 2024. As the third-generation leader from the prominent HD Deve Gowda political family, Nikhil is considered the JDS scion, but this string of defeats will raise questions about his political future for now.

3 BY Vijayendra

This by-election served as a critical test for BJP State unit president BY Vijayendra. While exit polls had predicted two seats for NDA and one for Congress, the results now put Vijayendra under intense pressure due to the party's poor performance, particularly when his leadership was being questioned by rebels in the party. Disgruntled BJP leader Basanagouda Patil Yatnal did not mince words, calling for Vijayendra's resignation. Additionally, CP Yogeeshwara alleged that Vijayendra had conspired with JD(S) to deny him a ticket.

Into the soul of music

Shilpa Rao mesmerises Bengaluru with her voice, enchanting vibe

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Shilpa Rao wove a magical charm over Bengaluru on Saturday, taking the audience into a world of music along with 'Subhanallah.' Her magical performances at a live concert in Phoenix Market City, Whitefield, left everyone in awe.

Shining in a silver dress, Rao noted that life is like that; we should stay like a child; when someone says love you, say love you too. She then rowed the musical boat, singing, 'Tere Hawale.' While sharing love through her songs among the audience, she noticed a couple dancing and appreciated them.

Matching her energy and vibes, the audience expressed their excitement by waving their hands and tuning their bodies to Rao's mesmerising vocals as she sang her recent releases—Chuttamele, Chaleya, Ghungroo, Bulleya, Kaavvaalaa, and more. 'If you are laughing, it's good for mental health,' said Rao during her performance.

Talking to the fans who filled the concert venue in large numbers, she said, "You stop having fun if you sit. Thank you so much; your presence here today means a lot."

For Rao, the essence of timeless music lies in authenticity. "If you create music for the sheer pleasure of making it, for connecting with yourself, it stays longer," she says. This philosophy is reflected in her ability to effortlessly bridge classical and contemporary styles, which she beautifully showcased as she sang 'Malang'. She views Indian classical music as the bedrock of all musical expressions. "Without classical music, there's no foundation. It's all intertwined," she emphasises.

Talk time!

With a career spanning over 18 glorious years, the Grammy-nominated singer has become synonymous with versatility, emotion, and a passion that knows no bounds. Reflecting on the experience, Shilpa shared, "Concerts are special. We love to interact with the audience—it's not just about me but about everyone being part of a musical journey." Rao believes that if you create music purely for the joy of self-expression, it resonates deeply and endures. "That's what makes a song timeless."

Rao's voice transcends languages and cultures, a trait evident in her recent multilingual releases. She credits this to her penchant for listening to music from across the globe. "Listening to music in different languages repeatedly helps you connect with the language and the emotion behind it," she explains.

But it's not just her versatility in languages that sets her apart. Rao is the only Indian singer to have performed at Coke Studio Pakistan, a platform known for its deep-rooted cultural expressions. Her performance resonated with audiences in both India and Pakistan, highlighting music's power to unite. She also graced the global stage at the Glastonbury Festival in 2015, where she enchanted an international audience with her soulful renditions.

> **"The love my fans have shown me is overwhelming. My music is my gratitude to them. To my fans, thank you so much; your presence here today means a lot** — Shilpa Rao

Rao never misses an opportunity to thank her fans for their unwavering support. "The love they've shown me is overwhelming, and my music is my gratitude to them," she says humbly.

Advice for new generation

While Rao is reluctant to dole out advice, she encourages young artists to remain true to themselves. "There will always be new battles, battles no one has fought before. As long as you're improving yourself and not doing something just because it's expected of you, you'll find your way," she advises.

For Rao, the journey of music is a lifelong commitment to learning and growth. When asked to sum up her career in one word, she doesn't hesitate: "Learning." It is this spirit of perpetual curiosity and evolution that makes her music not just heard but felt.

A legacy in the making

Rao's enduring career is a testament to her passion, resilience, and ability to adapt to an ever-changing musical landscape. Whether it's her Bollywood hits, her international collaborations, she continues to inspire and innovate. Her voice is a beacon for those seeking music that transcends time, borders, and language.

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORYBEHINDTHEPHOTO

WINTER MORNINGS

With winter approaching, sunrises get more mesmerising

The picture was clicked by reader **Rishi Upmanyu**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

Daily waste production reaches 6,000 metric tons in Bengaluru

Although city has seven waste processing units, most are non-operational due to technical issues and public protests

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The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is grappling with an escalating waste management crisis as daily waste production reaches a staggering 6,000 metric tons. Despite the National Green Tribunal's (NGT) directives, waste continues to accumulate across the city, leaving BBMP struggling to manage the situation. Household waste collection is surpassing expectations and disposal space is dwindling. According to the BBMP's chief engineer for solid waste management, effective waste management requires citizen cooperation, yet waste segregation remains inadequate, not only in apartments and housing complexes but also in individual houses.

Bengaluru's sole waste dumping ground

An official said, "Currently, Mitiganahalli stands as the only functional landfill within BBMP's jurisdiction. Although the city has seven waste processing units, most are non-operational due to technical issues and public protests. There is optimism that the upcoming waste-to-energy plant in Bidadi, with an 11.5 MW capacity, might alleviate some of the burden. Additionally, a 370-MW liquefied natural gas-based power plant is being set up in Yelahanka by the Energy Department." Environmentalists, including Dr AN Yellappa Reddy, stress that waste management is a shared responsibility. The burning of plastics, for example, poses severe health risks, including cancer, underscoring the need for greater public awareness and participation in waste reduction efforts.

Garbage piled up near Koramangala passport office in Bengaluru (File photo)

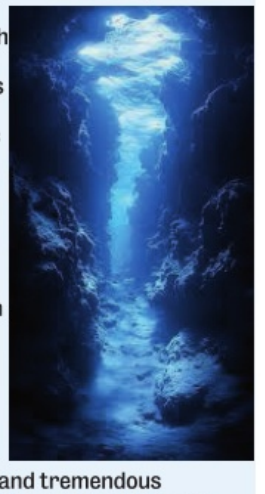
Lack of new initiatives from BBMP

Sources said that over the past two years, BBMP has failed to introduce new strategies to tackle the waste crisis. Criticism is mounting from citizens who question the value of continued tax payments in light of BBMP's inefficacy. Moreover, many activists allege that BBMP has ceased involving citizens and community groups in waste management, further complicating the issue.

Anand Kumar, a citizen activist, said, "BBMP must urgently prioritise waste segregation at the source and enforce strict penalties for non-compliance. Establishing more decentralised waste processing units in each ward can significantly reduce the pressure on existing facilities. Public awareness campaigns are essential to educate citizens on the importance of reducing, reusing, and recycling waste. Additionally, BBMP should collaborate with local communities and environmental organisations to develop sustainable waste management practices. By integrating technology and adopting zero-waste policies, we can create a cleaner, more livable city. It's crucial that BBMP takes a proactive approach before the waste crisis spirals out of control."

DID YOU KNOW?

Mount Everest could fit inside the Mariana Trench, the deepest point in the Earth's oceans, with more than a mile of water left over. The deepest area of the waters on Earth is the Mariana Trench, which is found in the western Pacific Ocean. Mount Everest is around 29,032 feet (8,849 metres) high, and the Mariana Trench is about 36,070 feet (10,994 metres) deep. Complete darkness, crushing temperatures, and tremendous pressure are produced by this depth. Above the bottom of the Challenger Deep, the trench's lowest point, the atmospheric pressure is more than 1,000 times higher than it is above sea level. This is the same as fifty jumbo planes' weight on one square inch. Despite these unfavorable circumstances, life—including odd and intriguing organisms like the Mariana snailfish—continues to flourish there. The Mariana Trench is proof of the Earth's extraordinary strength and the ability of life to endure even under the worst conditions.



GET HEARD WITH MIRROR

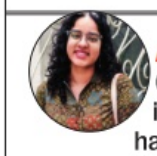
9591233247

Let's see how much you know about Namma Bengaluru, folks. Tell us something incredible and mind-boggling about this beautiful city and our editors and researchers will check it out. If it's credible, we'll give it a shout-out, with your name and picture.

TAPTHECHATTER

where Bengalureans speak their mind

Which is your favourite green space in Bengaluru and why?



Aasaavari MG, BM Reader
One is Cubbon Park because it's so quiet and serene, and has so many trees. I love the pink trumpet flowers that bloom. I loved visiting Turahalli forest before it closed down.

Manasa Astagi, BM Reader
So two of my favourite green spots in Bengaluru are Cubbon Park and Lalbagh Botanical Garden. Cubbon Park is very near to where I live. So it is my favourite go-to for a quick escape. I love going to Lal Bagh because it's a perfect blend of nature and calm.

Astha Anand, BM Reader
I like visiting Nandi Hills for small treks. I have also visited Praani Sanctuary, which is a place for rescued animals. Other than these, there are places like Jayamangali Blackbuck Reserve, Hurtidurga, Huliyurdurga and Nijagal Betta for trekking.

Parampreet Singh, BM Reader
I like going to Cubbon Park, Lalbagh and that stretch from South End Circle to RV Road, Jayanagar. I think that's really beautiful and green.

Veena KB, BM Reader
One of the green havens that I have visited in Bengaluru is Lalbagh botanical garden. It's a beautiful place to visit. The other place I would recommend is Agara Lake, it's a beautiful serene place to visit. Early mornings are the best time to go.

Esha Narayan, BM Reader
The Airforce campus have beautiful well-maintained gardens with beautiful roads. The second would be Lalbagh. Lalbagh in Bengaluru holds the biggest botanical garden as well as it holds flower shows every year.

SPEAK TO US

Which are some pedestrian-friendly spaces in Bengaluru?

If you want to be featured in this section, mail us your answer to this question, in 25 words, with 'Tap The Chatter' in the subject line. Mail us with your name, occupation & a picture at WhatsApp us on 9591233247 or mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com

Who let the Doge out?

Dogecoin is a joke - so what's behind its rally?

Rockets aren't the only thing Elon Musk is sending into the stratosphere.

After a three-year plummet, Dogecoin is blasting off again, jumping 250% since the election of Donald Trump – part of a broader wave of optimism in the industry, due to Trump's courting of crypto advocates during his campaign.

Trump's informal appointment of Musk to what he calls the Department of Government Efficiency – D.O.G.E for short – also helped pump the dog-themed meme coin.

This isn't the first time Musk, who styles himself as "the Dogefather," has fueled interest in Dogecoin.

In May 2021, its price shot up in anticipation of Musk's guest appearance on "Saturday Night Live." During one skit, Musk played a financial analyst in conversation with a Weekend Update host, who repeatedly asked him, "What is Dogecoin?" After some obfuscation, Musk's character finally admitted it was a hustle. The price of the coin went into a freefall. Just over a year later, it had shed over 90% of its peak value.

The losses hit small investors hard. In 2022, one of them filed a class action lawsuit against Musk for market manipulation and insider trading, though the case was dismissed in August 2024.

Why has Dogecoin – a meme coin that was never meant to be taken seriously as an investment – seen such extreme swings in value?

We're all in it together

Dogecoin was launched in 2013 to spoof bitcoin and a slew of other cryptocurrencies that were claiming to disrupt the traditional world of finance. Two strangers from across the globe met online, copied the code of an existing coin, and branded it with the already popular Doge internet meme – a picture of a Shiba Inu dog surrounded by fragments of broken English: "wow much coin."

Although their main goal was to make the coin pointless and undesirable, it became one of the most popular and enduring cryptocurrencies on the market.

Following Dogecoin's previous surge in 2021, I studied how its fervent network of influencers and everyday investors worked together to draw tremendous attention – and capital – to the joke currency.

To understand the appeal of these absurd investments, you have to look at the time and energy that users invest into these networks and the rewards, both financial and social, they get in return.

Meme coins are collaborative enterprises. Members of these online communities have an economic incentive to become outspoken boosters: The more the value of Dogecoin rises, the more their investments grow. But they also receive social validation from other meme coin investors when they pump up the coin.

In other words, behind every meme coin is a collective of strangers on a communal mission to make more money.

Dogecoin and its imitators have been described by their leadership as crypto movements, shared journeys and community-owned projects. Beyond branding the assets with culturally resonant images, whether it's a Shiba Inu dog or Pepe the Frog, successful crypto ventures are characterized by complex webs of trust. Trust in the technology. And trust that those holding power in the networks won't exploit the rest.

Participation in meme coin communities entails embracing an alternative economic experience. They are speculative sandboxes for playing outside of the conventional rules of investment

In times of price appreciation, the collective buzzes with elation.

During price dips, community members mutually reinforce their comrades' – and their own – beliefs that this is just a bump in the road and that their collective efforts will eventually lead to a handsome payoff. Even in the coldest of crypto winters, this ritualistic behavior helps these speculative communities endure. Community serves as a substitute for financial loss. The investment strategies in these communities – and the conviction in their payoff – involve repeating and reposting what others have said, like any internet meme.

Trolling valuation

The real value of meme coins cannot be understood in the same way as traditional assets, such as stocks and physical commodities. These types of assets have fundamentals, such as a company's financial statements, or public demand for basic goods, from coffee to oil. Conversely, the fundamentals of meme coins are reflected in their network activity, such as daily active users, and less concrete metrics, such as social sentiment and mindshare.

Of course, the valuations of traditional assets are also affected by these social factors. The difference is that meme coins offer little by way of productive activity. They add nothing to the economy. Occasionally, their leadership will build financial services around them, but these are generally added as afterthoughts, especially as a way to drum up more speculative excitement.

Meme coins troll the traditional conventions of valuation and mock the edicts and dogmas of mainstream investors. And that's exactly the point.

Strong push

Musk is the quintessential meme coin influencer.

As the richest man in the world, he's viewed by many as a paragon of savvy investing. His massive following extends far beyond Dogecoin's social network. And his promotional efforts are playful – so playful that the judge in his class-action case dismissed his Dogecoin tweets as mere "puffery" and that "no reasonable investor could rely upon them."

Dogecoin reached the peak of its memetic momentum when Musk appeared on "Saturday Night Live." Now, instead of sitting at the Weekend Update news desk cracking jokes, he's sitting in Trump's office advising the president-elect. In other words, Dogecoin's memetic resonance has ascended from pop culture to politics, helping it capture a bigger slice of the public's mindshare.

While Dogecoin has benefited from Musk's proximity to Trump, the broader crypto market is leaping with optimism for a crypto-friendly administration. Speaking at the Bitcoin 2024 conference in July, the GOP candidate ensured he'd make the US "the crypto capital of the planet." Between Musk buddying up with Trump and a shifting regulatory environment, the dog can once again run free.

Maximilian Brichta, University of Southern California, The Conversation

BITS & BYTES

BOOST FOR ANTHROPIC

Amazon.com pumped another $4 billion into OpenAI competitor Anthropic, as the e-commerce giant goes up against Big Tech rivals in a race to capitalize on generative artificial intelligence technology.

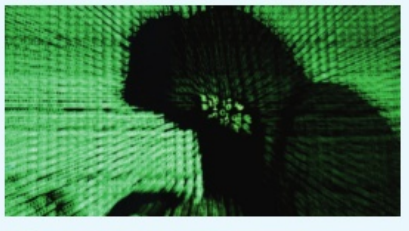
This doubles Amazon's investment in the firm known for its GenAI chatbot Claude, but it remains a minority investor, the startup said. Similar to Amazon's previous $4 billion investment, it comes in the form of convertible notes. Anthropic is also in talks with additional investors to raise more capital on the back of Amazon backing, sources added. **Reuters**

APPLE, GOOGLE IN RADAR

Apple and Google aren't giving consumers a genuine choice of mobile web browsers, a British watchdog said Friday in a report that recommends they face an investigation under new UK digital rules taking effect next year.

The Competition and Markets Authority took aim at Apple, saying the iPhone maker's tactics hold back innovation by stopping rivals from giving users new features like faster webpage loading. Apple does this by restricting progressive web apps, which don't need to be downloaded from an app store and aren't subject to app store commissions, the report said. "This technology is not able to fully take off on iOS devices," the watchdog said in a provisional report. **AP**

CHINESE HACKERS ALERT



Chinese hackers are positioning themselves in US critical infrastructure IT networks for a potential clash with the United States, a top American cybersecurity official said on Friday.

Morgan Adamski, executive director of US Cyber Command, said Chinese-linked cyber operations are aimed at gaining an advantage in case of a major conflict with the US Officials have warned that China-linked hackers have compromised IT networks and taken steps to carry out disruptive attacks in the event of a conflict.

Adamski was speaking to researchers at the Cyberwarcon security conference in Arlington, Virginia. **Reuters**

HEALTH TIP: Pay special attention to foot health by wearing comfortable footwear, keeping feet clean and moisturising regularly

A glass of milk can keep fatal diseases like high blood pressure and the possibility of having a stroke at bay

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GREEN TRIPPING

Seven sustainable travel ideas every woman needs to adopt

Sustainability is more than a buzzword, it's a lifestyle choice that must extend into your travels. Adopting eco-friendly habits while travelling can make a significant difference as we move towards more conscious living. Here are seven cool ways Indian women can make their travels more sustainable – without sacrificing fun!

1. Support Local Businesses

One of the easiest ways to travel sustainably is by supporting local businesses. When you shop at local markets and have your meals at family-run eateries, your money helps fuel the local economy and reduce your carbon footprint. Look for businesses that prioritise eco-friendly practices – whether it's a café that sources its ingredients locally or a boutique hotel that reduces plastic waste. This approach also adds a touch of authenticity to your travel experience, making it feel more personalised and culturally rich.

2. Choose Eco-Stays And Homestays

Give eco-stays and homestays a chance! Not only do these accommodations offer a more immersive travel experience, they also tend to have a smaller environmental impact. Many eco-stays are designed with sustainability in mind, utilising renewable energy sources, water-saving technology, and green building materials. Opt for homestays run by locals, where you'll often find organic food, minimal waste, and a deeper connection to the local culture. It's like staying with extended family but without the awkward small talk!

3. Pack A Zero-Waste Travel Kit

One of the biggest culprits when it comes to environmental impact during travel is single-use plastic. Whether it's water bottles, toiletries or food packaging, it all adds up. The solution? A zero-waste travel kit. Stock it with essentials such as a reusable water bottle, bamboo cutlery, cloth napkins, and a steel or glass straw. You could even carry reusable zip-lock bags for snacks and toiletries. Not only will you reduce waste, but you'll also feel like a sustainable travel pro every time you whip out your eco-friendly kit!

4. Create A Capsule Wardrobe For Travel

One of the best things you can do for both the planet and your suitcase is adopt a capsule wardrobe for travel. It's all about packing a few versatile pieces that you can mix and match. The benefits? Less luggage weight means a smaller carbon footprint (lighter flights, lower fuel usage), and you'll avoid the impulse to buy disposable, fast-fashion items on the go. Choose high-quality, durable clothes, and make a statement by wearing pieces that reflect local craftsmanship.

5. Travel Slow: Stay Longer, Explore Deeper

In this era of weekend getaways and whistle-stop tours, slow travel is a refreshing idea. It's simple: stay in one place for longer, immerse yourself more in the local culture, and explore mindfully. Slow travel helps reduce your carbon footprint by minimising the frequent use of transportation while allowing you to form deeper connections with the place and its people. Plus, it takes away the pressure of cramming everything into a tight schedule. Who needs the stress of ticking off tourist spots when you can sip chai with the locals?

6. Opt For Public Transport And Carpooling

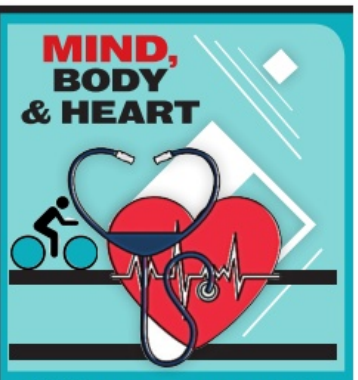
Ditch the cabs and rental cars; public transportation is where it's at! Not only is it a more eco-friendly way to get around, it also adds to the adventure quotient of your trip. Whether you're navigating a bus route in a new city or hopping onto a local train, public transport can give you a more authentic glimpse into the daily life of people in the place you're visiting. If public transport isn't an option, carpooling is a great alternative. Share rides with fellow travellers or locals using ride-sharing apps – an excellent way to split costs, reduce emissions, and even make new friends along the way.

7. Prioritise Experiences Over Souvenirs

It's tempting to bring back a suitcase full of souvenirs, but many of these trinkets often end up as clutter or waste. Instead, focus on collecting memories through experiences. Take that cooking class you've been eyeing, book a traditional dance performance, or join a local craft workshop. Experiences are far more valuable, and they won't end up gathering dust on a shelf. Plus, you'll have a story to tell every time someone asks about your travels, which is a far more interesting conversation starter than "I got this at the airport."

Sustainable travel doesn't mean you have to compromise on comfort or experience. With these tips in hand, you'll be well on your way to becoming a more eco-conscious traveller while still soaking up all the magic of your destination. Happy travels!

—Ravina M Sachdev, Femina



All you need to know about...

Standing at work

Not good for BP

Prolonged standing at work had a negative impact on blood pressure and in contrast, spending more time sitting at work was associated with better BP, a new study has revealed.

The Finish study from University of Turku, published in the journal Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise, suggests that activity behaviour during working hours may be more relevant to 24-hour blood pressure than recreational physical activity.

24-hour BP

"Rather than any single measurement, 24-hour blood pressure is a better indication of how blood pressure stresses the heart and blood vessels throughout the day and night," says doctoral researcher Jooa Norha.

If blood pressure is slightly high throughout the day and does not fall sufficiently even at night, blood vessels start to stiffen and the heart has to work harder to cope with the increased pressure.

"Over the years, this can lead to the development of cardiovascular disease," Norha added.

Take a break

In the Finnish Retirement and Aging study (FIREA) conducted at the University of Turku, the results confirm previous findings that physical activity at work can be harmful to the heart and circulatory system.

In particular, prolonged standing can raise blood pressure as the body boosts circulation to the lower limbs by constricting blood vessels and increasing the pumping power of the heart.

"A standing desk can provide a nice change from sitting at the office, but too much standing can be harmful. It's a good idea to take a break from standing during the work day, either by walking every half an hour or sitting for some parts of the day," Norha said.

—IANS

MIRRORLIGHTS

Probiotics before child birth may help protect against toxic exposures

Probiotic supplementation can reduce the negative impacts of polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) on neurodevelopment, behaviour and metabolism, according to a new study.

PBDEs are fire-retardant chemicals that are found everywhere — upholstery, carpets, curtains, electronics, and even infant products.

Known to disrupt hormones and persist in the environment, these pollutants have been detected in water, soil, air, food products, animals, human tissues and even breast milk, according to the study by University of California, Riverside and published in Archives of Toxicology.

"Exposure to PBDEs during the perinatal period produces autistic-like behaviour and metabolism syndrome in mice," said Margarita C Curras-Collazo, a professor of neuroscience who led the study.

"These compounds also disrupt the gut microbiome, which has been linked to brain and metabolic health. Our study shows supplementing the maternal diet with the probiotic Limosilactobacillus reuteri can help prevent these negative effects," Curras-Collazo added. L reuteri, or LR, typically resides in the digestive tract, where it generates lactic acid.

Additionally, it can be found in beans, artichokes, and sweet potatoes, and in fermented foods such as sourdough bread, as well as miso, kimchi, and sauerkraut. It is frequently included in yogurts and other dairy products and, therefore, is readily accessible.

The researchers exposed mouse mothers to a PBDE mixture or a control (corn oil) during pregnancy and breast-feeding. This was done over a 10-week period to model the kind of exposures humans face.

Some of the mice were supplemented with LR. The researchers then examined the offspring for developmental benchmarks during the postnatal period and for behaviour during adulthood.

They found male offspring exposed to PBDEs had a delay in body weight gain. Further, their incisor eruption was abnormally timed.

"To our surprise, we found LR treatment prevented delays in male weight gain and helped normalize the timing of tooth eruption in both sexes," said Elena Kozlova, a doctoral student working in Curras-Collazo's lab and co-first author on the paper. According to Curras-Collazo, using gut microbiota-focused therapies before birth through the mother may help protect against developmental and adult diseases linked to toxic exposures.

—IANS

Clooney-Pitt Wolfs' sequel scrapped

Wolfs 2', the sequel to the action comedy from 'Spider-Man: No Way Home' director Jon Watts that starred Brad Pitt and George Clooney, has been cancelled.

The confirmation comes after Collider published an interview with Watts Friday morning, as per Variety.

Promoting his new Disney+ 'Star Wars' series 'Skeleton Crew', the filmmaker was asked about his coming plans, responding "I don't know what I'm directing next, and I don't think there's going to be a 'Wolfs' sequel."

> "I don't think there is going to be a Wolfs' sequel"
> — Jon Watts

Earlier in August, Apple confirmed that it was pulling the wide theatrical release of the film, which it had partnered with Sony on as a distributor. Instead, "Wolfs" moved to a one-week limited theatrical engagement on September 20, with its debut on the streamer Apple TV+ coming a week after on September 27.

The abrupt new strategy, enacted just over a month ahead of release, raised some eyebrows, as Clooney had stated in 2023 that "Brad and I made the deal to do that movie where we gave money back to make sure that we had a theatrical release." But the shift to a limited run also came packaged with news that Apple had signed Jon Watts to direct, write and produce a "Wolfs" sequel, with Clooney and Pitt expected to return to play a pair of fixers operating in the criminal underworld.

In September, Brad Pitt and George Clooney attended the Venice premiere of the film in a grand way.

While speaking to People at the premiere, Clooney opened up about working with long-time friend Pitt.

"There's nothing good about it. It's all a disaster," said Clooney jokingly."It's fun to work with people you know really well," he added.

Apart from discussing their friendship, Clooney spoke about a controversial New York Times article that claimed he and Pitt were paid over USD 35 million each for their roles in Wolfs.

"[It was] an interesting article and whatever her source was for our salary, it is millions and millions and millions of dollars less than what was reported. And I am only saying that because I think it's bad for our industry if that's what people think is the standard bearer for salaries...it'll make it impossible to make films." —ANI

All applause

Veteran actress Shabana Azmi received a standing ovation at the 46th Festival des 3 Continents in Nantes, France, as the festival honoured her remarkable 50-year journey in cinema.

The retrospective showcases her exceptional work in films such as 'Ankur' (1974), 'Mandi' (1983), 'Masoom' (1983), and 'Arth' (1982).

Sharing her joy, Azmi posted a video of the event on Instagram with the caption, "It was overwhelming. Standing ovation and the respect was palpable. So energising to speak to young filmmakers who have mortgaged their houses, resorted to stealing mother's jewellery, will be on the streets if the films don't recover the money and yet all they can do is, think, breathe is CINEMA"

Azmi, a five-time National Film Award winner, has received numerous accolades throughout her career, including the Padma Shri in 1988 and the Padma Bhushan in 2012.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Shabana is set to play a pivotal role in filmmaker Rajkumar Santoshi's upcoming film 'Lahore 1947', which features Sunny Deol and Preity Zinta in the lead roles. —ANI

Assault charges against Majors dropped

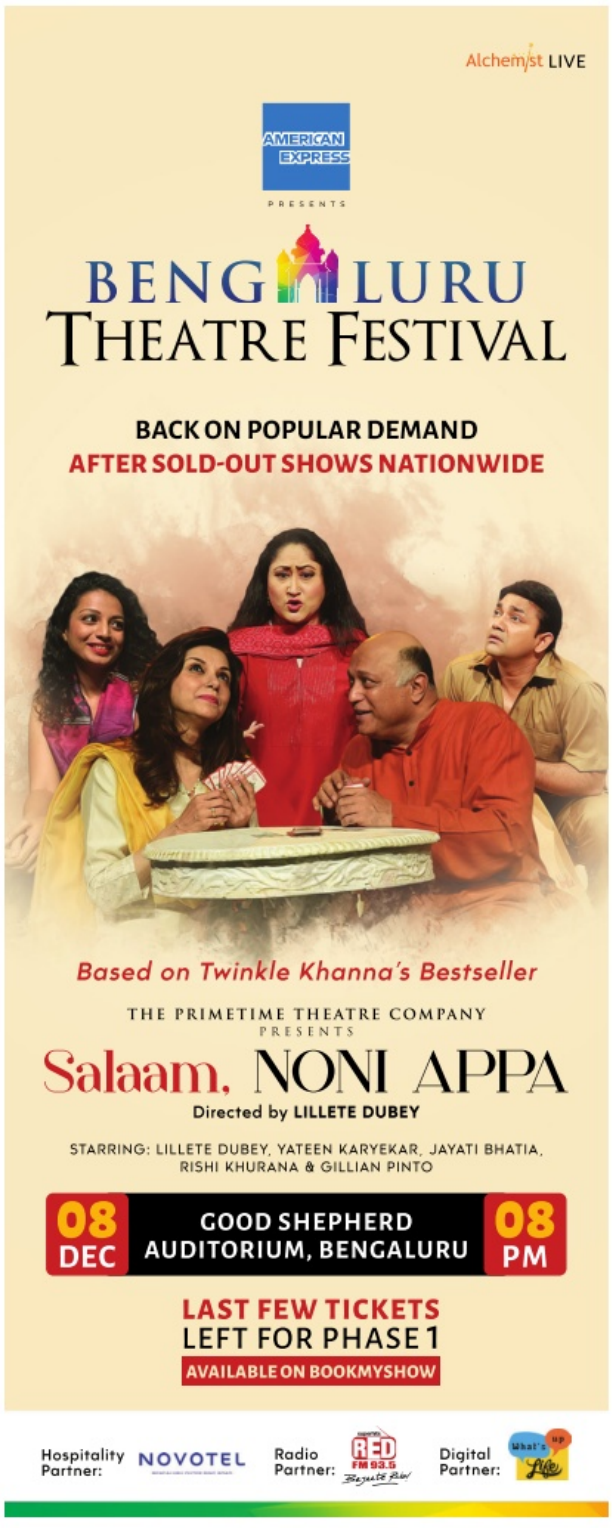
Jonathan Majors' ex-girlfriend has dropped her assault and defamation lawsuit against the once-rising Hollywood star after reaching a settlement.

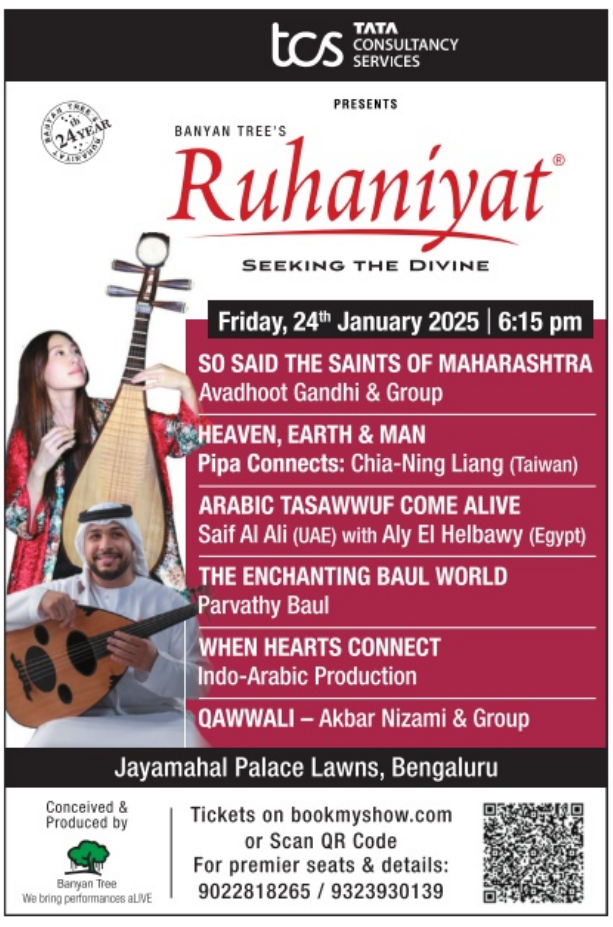
Lawyers for Majors and Grace Jabbari agreed to dismiss the case with prejudice, according to a joint filing in Manhattan federal court on Thursday.

Jabbari's lawyer said Friday that the suit was "favourably settled" but declined to elaborate.

"Grace Jabbari has exhibited tremendous courage throughout this very long and difficult process," attorney Brittany Henderson said in a statement. "We hope that she can finally put this chapter behind her and move forward with her head held high."

Representatives for Majors didn't respond to emails seeking comment Friday. —AP

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IPL 2025 Auction: Pant, Rahul, Iyer to push the bar high in Jeddah

One of the gala events of the cricketing world - the Indian Premier League (IPL) mega auction - will take centre stage in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia on Sunday. With months of off-field strategy and rigorous scouting, it will all come down to pure business as 10 franchises look to get the best possible squads for the 2025 season and beyond.

The two-day auction will be on Sunday and Monday from 3.30 pm onwards and will be broadcast live by Star Sports. The live streaming will be available on the Jio Cinema app and website.

In all, 577 players including 367 Indians and 210 overseas will be testing their fate to fill the maximum of 204 slots (70 overseas) available for the upcoming season. Among Indian players, 48 are capped and the remaining are uncapped professionals while 197 capped overseas and 12 uncapped foreign players will be up for grabs. This year, three players from Associate nations will also test their luck.

The auction proceedings will kick off with the first set of marquee players featuring the likes of Indian stars Rishabh Pant, KL Rahul, and Shreyas Iyer - all three of them led their respective teams last season but were not retained by their respective franchises - with a base price of Rs 2 crore. It is anticipated that Pant could be one of the most expensive players in the tournament's history with Delhi Capitals having the advantage of using the right-to-match card (RTM).

Cricketer Rishab Pant

The other set of marquee players includes Yuzvendra Chahal, Mohammed Shami, and Mohammed Siraj. At the same time, Mitchell Starc, who received the highest-ever bid at an IPL auction, Jos Buttler, Liam Livingstone, David Miller, and Kagiso Rabada are the five overseas players across two sets of marquee lists.

A total of 82 players (after the addition of Jofra Archer) have marked themselves under the top price bracket of Rs 2 crore and will hope to make the headline in the two-day mega event. Among others, 27 players are in the Rs 1.5 crore, 18 in Rs 1.25 crore, 23 in Rs 1 crore, 92 in Rs 75 lakh, eight in Rs 50 lakh, five in Rs 40 lakh and 320 are with Rs 30 lakh price tag.

After bringing down the curtain to his glorious red-ball career nearly three weeks before turning 42, England veteran pacer James Anderson took everyone by surprise as he registered himself at a base price of Rs 1.25 crore in search of his first-ever IPL franchise. In contrast, Bihar's 13-year-old Vaibhav Suryavanshi will head into the auction as the youngest player for this edition.

Among the uncapped Indian players, all eyes will be on Ashutosh Sharma, Angkrish Raghuvanshi, Vaibhav Arora and Mahipal Lomror. Ashutosh and Mahipal impressed with their attacking stroke-making for Punjab Kings and Royal Challengers Bengaluru last year with the former having the advantage of bowling left-arm spin. Delhi batter Angkrish has a solid chance to get a contract for the second consecutive season after showing a glimpse of his talent for title-winner Kolkata Knight Riders.

Angkrish's former KKR teammate Vaibhav Arora is another such candidate to fly high in the auction after a stellar season including 11 wickets in 10 matches. **–IANS**

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I,SHAILENDRA Kumar Verma R/O Flat No 4, Ground Floor, Meenakshi Apartment, 2nd Cross, Vinayaka Layout, Bhoopsandra,BLR-94 changed my name from Shailendar Kumar Varma to Shailendra Kumar Verma for all future purposes.

I, NETHRAVATHI, Residing at No 54, 1st Cross, 1st Main, Byarasandra Kaveramma Temple Street, Jayanagar, 1st Block East, Bangalore-560011, Have changed my name to NETRAVATHI B V , vide affidavit dated 23/11/2024 sworn before Notary Aravind Patil G.G Bangalore

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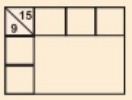
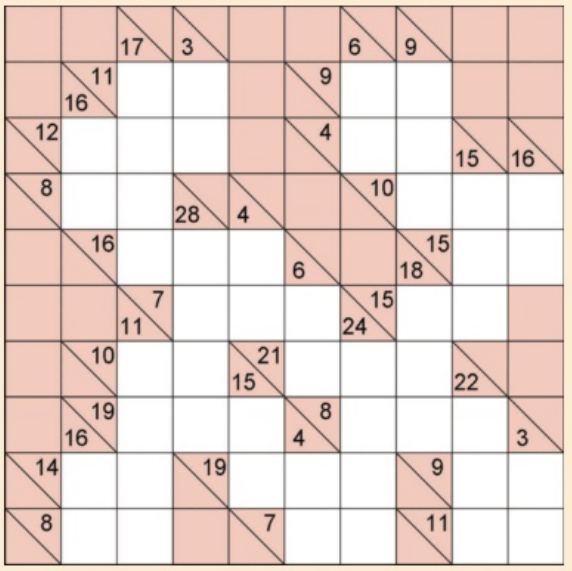
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

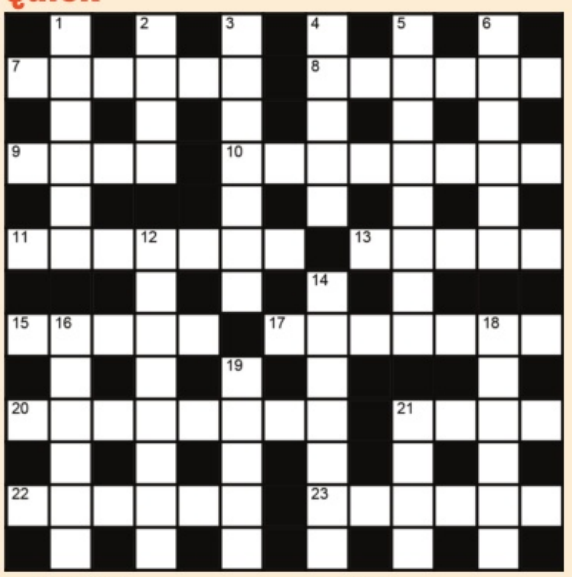


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Gadget (6)
8 Perform, supply or contribute (6)
9 Dossier (4)
10 Government building that offers a view of Ulsoor Lake on one side and the Bangalore Race Course on the other (4,4)
11 Pop star Phil ____ (7)
13 Tilted over (5)
15 Frown (5)
17 Don't hit below ___ ___. it's a foul (3,4)
20 Took a different path (8)
21 Young dogs (4)
22 Bird of prey (6)
23 Country (6)

DOWN

1 Type of sheep (6)
2 Fermented grape juice (4)
3 Division (7)
4 Entreats or begs (5)
5 Falling (2,3,3)
6 Be a seller of? (4,2)
12 Hollywood actress Jennifer ____ (8)
14 Upbraiding (7)
16 The highest or most intense point in a story or a drama (6)
18 Small computer (6)
19 Pain or distress (5)
21 Route (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: O EQUALS P

GA YIYAFH PUXWM OASOFA
UILA KSSC VAWVA ZWFAVV
PUAH IKYAA GXPU ZV.

Linemaro

Where's the 'like' button for that smile?

Mindchow

The same road goes both up and down.

Joke of the day

I don't want to be remembered. I want the nice words when I can hear them -- Jerry Lewis.

Loop

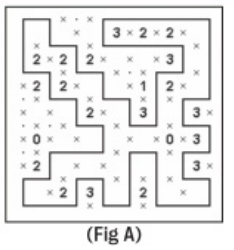
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

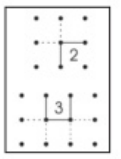
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)

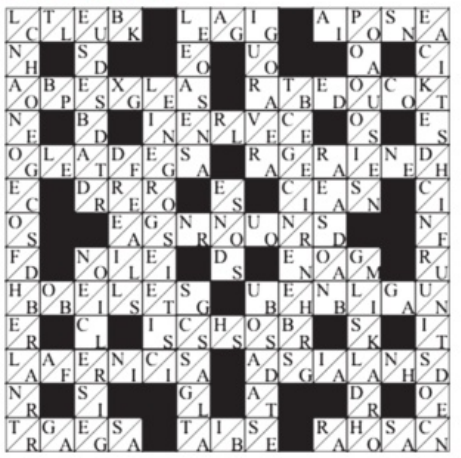


(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed

Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2 C	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				
9				

ACROSS

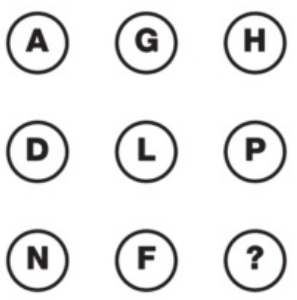
1 Canst; 6 Nu Ale;
7 As jar; 8 For NT;
9 So use

DOWN

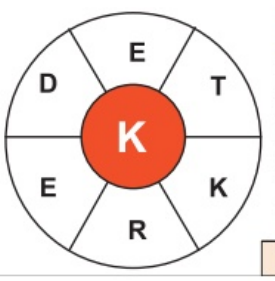
1 SS fur; 2 Coral;
3 Juno a; 4 As Nan;
5 Et set

Mensapuzzle

What is missing from the last circle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

02 Average; 03 Good; 04 Outstanding

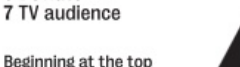
SudokuChallenge

6		3			1		7	
	1	9			8			
	8			4	7			
8			5				2	
2		5				1		6
	7				9			8
			7	1			6	
			4			2	5	
	2		9			3		7

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Easy ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ = 11
1 2 3 7

Medium ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ = 33
1 3 5 7

Hard ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ = 2
3 6 7 5

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

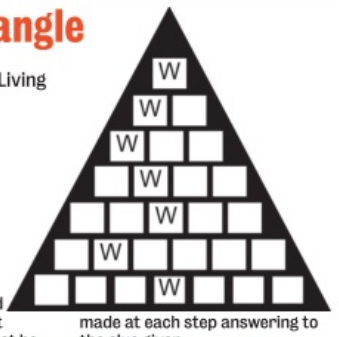
Differences: 1. Tree is different. 2. Man's left arm is not seen. 3. Rear tire is thinner. 4. Man's hand is showing. 5. Stripe is missing from sleeve. 6. Lapel is different.

Riddler

What connects these four things?
Name Photo Stamp Visa

Alpha triangle

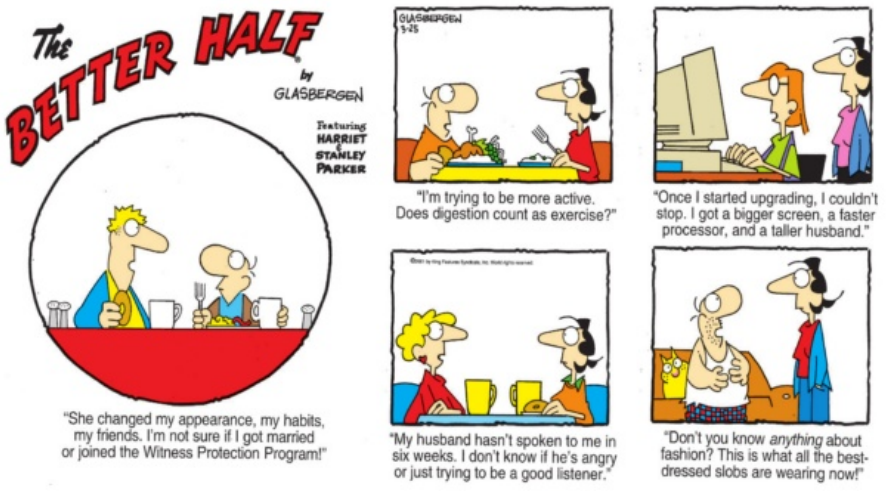
1 Watt, abbr.
2 Ayn Rand's _ The Living
3 Diminutive
4 Mama sheep
5 Drain
6 Deviate
7 TV audience

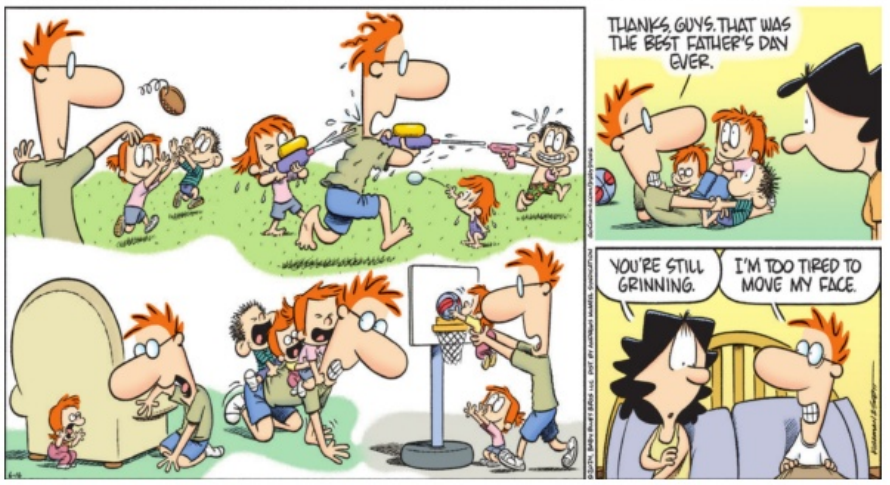


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS


The BETTER HALF
by GLASBERGEN
featuring HARRIET & STANLEY PARKER
"She changed my appearance, my habits, my friends. I'm not sure if I got married or joined the Witness Protection Program!"
"I'm trying to be more active. Does digestion count as exercise?"
"Once I started upgrading, I couldn't stop. I got a bigger screen, a faster processor, and a taller husband."
"My husband hasn't spoken to me in six weeks. I don't know if he's angry or just trying to be a good listener."
"Don't you know anything about fashion? This is what all the best-dressed slobs are wearing now!"



THINGS SURE DO LOOK DIFFERENT FROM UP HERE.
SO PEACEFUL.
WHO'D EVER SUSPECT THAT SOMEWHERE DOWN THERE IS THE THING THAT SLAUGHTERED OUR CREW.

FLASH GORDON
BY JIM KEEFE
SUNSET ON THE PLANET MONGO.
SO, BULLOK, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU OUT THERE?
I WAS TORN UP PRETTY BAD BY THE CREATURE THAT ATTACKED THE SHIP. I LOST CONSCIOUSNESS.
HOW CAN THAT BE? YOU DON'T EVEN LOOK BRUISED!
I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT, BUT I FEEL BETTER NOW THAN I EVER HAVE. MY WOUNDS ARE ALL BUT HEALED!
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
WHAT CAN I SAY? CHALK IT UP TO CLEAN LIVING!
"EVEN A MAN WHO'S PURE OF HEART AND SAYS HIS PRAYERS AT NIGHT..."
WHAT'S THAT?
THORNE, THERE'S A TRANQUILIZER GUN IN BACK. GRAB IT!
HMMM
HURRY! THE SUN'S ALREADY GONE DOWN! WE HAVEN'T MUCH TIME!
BULLOK? WHAT'S WRONG?
AAHHHR!
BULLOK...?
RRRRR
NEXT: TERROR IN THE SKY!

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you may feel dull, which could affect your health. You might not achieve the desired results from professional meetings and may feel as though your time is being wasted. However, from late evening, disappointments may turn into happiness. It is advised to avoid rushing while driving or embarking on adventurous tours.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today is a good day. In business, you may gain new clients, which will contribute to growth and profits. Singles are likely to find a suitable match. In your domestic life, avoid hiding anything from your spouse, as it could create a gap in your relationship. Job seekers may find a new job, and there are chances of promotions in your current role.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
With the help of your strong network, you may implement your business plans today. Your wisdom may help you achieve profits. Harmony is likely in your domestic life, with good understanding between you and your spouse. Individuals working in the metal industry or as booking agents will perform well.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
You may feel more religious today and might plan a visit to a spiritual place to find peace of mind. You may donate to charity or contribute to a spiritual cause. Those around you may receive your financial or moral support. You will enjoy each moment with satisfaction and patience.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today, you might feel dull and are advised to control your short temper. Your focus will be tested repeatedly, so avoid distractions and stay committed to your goals. It is also recommended to refrain from investing in unnecessary things. Lovebirds should avoid arguing over trivial matters.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, you may feel happy and mentally at peace. You are likely to spend time with friends and family, enjoying your domestic life. Your bond with your spouse may strengthen, maintaining harmony at home. A new business partnership might emerge, and innovative ideas could help your business grow.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
You may begin your day with positive thoughts. You are likely to overcome opponents and hidden enemies, and your work may be appreciated by your seniors. This could bring you new responsibilities or a promotion. Students, blessed by the moon, may find the right path to choose good career options.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today, you might be busy with family matters. You may explore additional sources of income, leading to gains. You could develop an interest in artefacts, movies, or glamour, which may enhance your creativity. Lovebirds are likely to gain clarity in their relationships, and students may make progress toward their career goals.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
You may face several options today, which might leave you feeling confused. Consulting your elders before making significant decisions would be wise. Your past karma could guide you in making the right choices regarding work and domestic life. Pay special attention to your parents' health today.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Your business plans are likely to succeed with the support of your subordinates. You may undertake short business trips that will prove beneficial in the near future. Involvement in social and family gatherings may help expand your social network.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today is favourable for gains. You may create effective plans to achieve good returns on your investments. By avoiding unnecessary expenses, you are likely to boost your savings. Lovebirds might be occupied with family functions.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today, you may focus on issues related to siblings and relatives, but you can expect support at work to ensure smooth progress. Your network might help you complete tasks. You may also plan a new venture with the help of your siblings and contacts, leading to smart gains after some effort.

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Anika Varsha, Bengaluru

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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
√50 + √(3×6) – 14/√2
√50 + √18 – 14/√2
√(6×2) + √(3²×2) – 14/√2
√3² × √2 + √3² × √2 – 14/√2
5√2 + 3√2 – 14/√2
8√2 – 14/√2
8√2 – (14×√2)/(√2 ×√2)
8√2 – (14√2)/2
8√2 -7√2

RIDDLER
They are all things seen on a passport

FAST FIVE

S	C	A	N	T
U	L	N	A	E
R	A	J	A	S
F	R	O	N	T
S	O	U	S	E

BULL'S EYE
eked, reek, trek, TREKKED

STRIKE OUT

T	A	G	S	A	B	S
R	I	L	L	T	D	O
A	F	R	I	C	A	S
E	L	I	C	H	O	R
H	O	I	S	T	S	B
F	O	L	E	S	N	O
O	A	G	R	O	U	N
E	D	E	R	S	I	A
G	L	A	D	E	S	A
N	B	N	E	R	V	E
A	P	E	X	E	S	A
C	L	U	B	L	A	G

QUICK

M	W	S	P	O	D	A
D	E	V	I	C	E	R
R	N	G	A	T	A	L
F	I	L	E	M	A	Y
N	E	S	I	R	E	D
L	E	A	N	T	O	N
C	O	L	L	I	N	S
A	T	C	B	O	T	A
S	C	O	W	L	T	H
L	R	A	I	A	E	B
D	I	V	E	R	G	E
M	N	O	I	A	T	O
A	N	A	T	I	O	N
F	A	L	C	O	N	G
R	E	Y	G	H	P	X

MENSA PUZZLE
T. Working in rows, the numerical value of the letter in the numerical column equals the sum of the letters in the right hand column and central columns.

QUOTE UNCODE
We rarely think people have good sense unless they agree with us.

SUDOKU

6	4	3	2	9	1	8
7	1	9	3	5	8	6
5	8	2	6	4	7	9
8	9	1	5	3	6	7
2	3	5	8	7	4	1
4	7	6	1	2	9	3
3	5	8	7	1	2	4
9	6	7	4	8	3	2
1	2	4	9	6	5	3

ALPHA TRIANGLE
W, We, Wee, Ewes, Sewer, Swerve, Viewers.

GO FIGURE
Easy
2 + 3 – 1 + 7 = 11
Medium
7 + 5 – 1 x 3 = 33
Hard
6 – 7 x 3 + 5 = 2

LOOP

KAKURO

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 # New film
Naga Chaitanya announces new film NC24 on his birthday, shares poster

A HOME TO CALL THEIR OWN

A little bird tells us Tamannaah and Vijay are on mission house-hunting

Tamannaah Bhatia and Vijay Verma have been known to paint the town red with their every public appearance. The couple who has always spoken the most beautiful things about one another are expected to take their relationship to the next level. Reports suggest that as the star couple is getting serious with each other and planning to tie the knot, they are also looking for a dream house to settle in.

According to the report from 123Telugu, an insider has unveiled that Tamannaah Bhatia and Vijay Verma will be getting married in 2025. The preparations for this next chapter of their lives have already begun, and as we speak, the couple reportedly is on the house hunting mission, screening lavish apartments where they would settle after exchanging vows.

However, Tamannaah Bhatia and Vijay Verma have neither accepted nor denied such reports. As of now no official comment on the wedding has been made by the couple. Nevertheless, the reports have added to the excitement of their fanbase, who are eagerly waiting for the official announcement.

Tamannaah and Vijay confirmed their relationship around the release of 'Lust Stories 2' in 2023. Recently, during a conversation with Shubhankar Mishra Vijay spoke about his bond with Tamannaah. He shared that though they have not been secretive about their relationship, there are moments they wish to keep private.

The star confessed to having over 5,000 love-drenched photos, that belong just to them. — **ETimes**

Action-packed film about corrupt politicians & cops

PRABHUTVA
2.5 RATING | ★★½☆☆
- **DIRECTOR** Abhishek Shetty
- **ACTORS** Chetan Chandra, Pavana Gowda, Adi Lokesh, Rajesh Nataranga, Shashikumar, Ambika, Sangeetha
- **CERTIFICATION** U/A
- **Duration** 152 minutes

Prabhutva is a long-delayed movie. It was ready to arrive in theaters more than a year ago but a tussle between director and producer became a hurdle to its release. The title card of the movie has no mention of the director. It only mentions the name of the assistant director. The movie revolves around corrupt and lewd politicians and police officers and the struggles of honest people who want to contribute to the society. The movie begins with a police officer (Shashikumar) bringing Manohar also known as Manu (Chetan Chandra), an accused in a murder case. He is accused of killing Ravi (Harish Rai), the brother of local MLA Vijayalakshmi. At this juncture, the director introduces a flashback to throw some light on what made Manu, a mechanic, kill Ravi. It also explains how Anu (Pavana Gowda), an environmentalist from Rajajinagar, happened to meet Manu while escaping from anti-social elements. She falls in love with Manu. Meanwhile, rowdies demand Manu repair their vehicle. A fight takes place between Manu and the rowdies. Manu's mother gets killed by the rowdies. What happens to Manu? And will he succeed in teaching a lesson to anti-social elements is what Prabhutva is all about.

Chetan Chandra, as an angry young man who wants to eliminate evil from society, is convincing. Pavana Gowda, who plays the female lead, is beautiful but has to hone her acting skills. The problem with this movie is that it gives too much importance to violence and crime. The movie has too many dialogues. It is worth a watch if you like action-oriented movies. **— Y Maheswara Reddy**

This story has many interesting twists

ARAM ARAVINDA SWAMY
3.0 RATING | ★★★☆☆
- **DIRECTOR** Abhishek Shetty
- **ACTORS** Anish Tejeshwar, Milana Nagaraj, Hrithika Srinivas, Achyuth Kumar, Gowrav Shetty, RJ Vikky
- **CERTIFICATION** U/A
- **Duration** 132 minutes

Aram Aravinda Swamy manages to keep audiences curious throughout as it gains momentum gradually. Director Abhishek Shetty, apart from making an entertaining film, has tried to convey a message to the audiences on the importance of punctuality and the problems of lying.

The movie is about Aravind (Anish Tejeshwar), a loan recovery agent who falls in love with Geetha (Milana Nagaraj), a school teacher. He lies to her about his financial status and parents. She insists that he talk to her parents about marriage but he goes to his hometown. In a peculiar situation, he ends up tying the knot with Lakshmi (Hrithika Srinivas), a person with disability. His father works as a driver for Lakshmi's father. Later, he comes to know that Lakshmi's father and his friend manipulated him to marry Lakshmi by administering him a mysterious drug.

Meanwhile, Geetha comes to know about his marriage with Lakshmi. She decides to marry another person in Kerala and move on with her life but he appears at the marriage hall along with Lakshmi. He tries to convince Geetha. What happens to him is what Aram Aravinda Swamy is all about.

As far as the performances of the actors are concerned, Anish Tejeshwar has succeeded in all departments - sentiments, comedy and romance. Milana Nagaraj is charming. She has acted well as a concerned lover. Hrithika Srinivas, as a person with disability, has no scope for dialogues, but her gestures and sign language are good. Achyuth Kumar has provided good support.

All the songs are good.

It is worth a watch for families.

—Y Maheswara Reddy

Suhana's wish for Agastya

Actor Suhana Khan, daughter of Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan and Gauri Khan, penned a sweet birthday wish for her 'The Archies' co-star Agastya Nanda.

Taking to Instagram Story, Suhana posted a picture showcasing her and Agastya in a goofy mood. Suhana could be seen pulling Agastya's ear.

Suhana looks gorgeous in a black tube dress, while Agastya is seen in a black shirt and a white jacket.

Sharing the picture, she wrote, "Happy birthday."

Suhana and Agastya are rumoured to be dating each other. However, they have not disclosed anything about their bond.

Agastya's sister and entrepreneur Navya Naveli Nanda also posted a special birthday message for him. She shared a collage of their pictures together. The first one was a childhood picture in which Navya held her brother in her lap. The other picture shows the brother and sister recreating the same pose from their childhood.

"Happy birthday Jr! (red heart emoji) I love you," she captioned the post.

Agastya is the grandson of veteran actors Jaya Bachchan and Amitabh Bachchan. He made his acting debut last year with Zoya Akhtar's directorial 'The Archies'.

In the coming months, he will be seen in the film 'Ikkis', which also stars legendary actor Dharmendra and Jaideep Ahlawat.

"Ikkis" is touted to be a war drama based on the life of Second Lieutenant Arun Khetarpal. He was awarded Param Vir Chakra posthumously and lived an exemplary life.

Helmed by Sriram Raghavan, the film will release in 2025. It is being made under Dinesh Vijan's Maddock Films. **— ANI**